



# The TREASURE Forest Program

**A**labama has over 22 million acres of forestland. These forests provide valuable resources which directly affect the quality of life of every Alabamian. They provide wood products that we depend on every day. These same forests also provide habitat for wildlife, clean the air, purify water, protect valuable topsoil, and provide scenic beauty and recreational opportunities. For all these reasons, Alabama's forests are vitally important.

Recognizing both the economic and social importance of Alabama's forests and its multiple resources, the Alabama Forestry Planning Committee, made up of forestry and natural resource agencies and groups in the state, initiated the TREASURE Forest Program in 1974. TREASURE is an acronym that stands for **T**imber, **R**ecreation, **E**nvironment, and **A**esthetics for a **S**ustained **U**sable **R**esource.

The TREASURE Forest Program is a voluntary program that seeks to promote sound and sustainable, multiple-use forest management. This type of management encourages landowners to use their forests wisely to meet their own needs while at the same time protecting and enhancing the environment. The TREASURE Forest Program promotes this management ethic through two avenues: education and recognition. Education is provided through information and on-the-ground technical assistance from the member agencies and groups of the Alabama Forestry Planning Committee. *Alabama's TREASURED Forests* magazine is a quarterly publication that offers valuable insight on management according to TREASURE Forest principles. Recognition occurs through the TREASURE Forest Award.

The TREASURE Forest Program has been a tremendous success. In fact, it has been so successful that it was used as the model for the National Forest Stewardship Program, passed by the U.S. Congress in 1990.

The TREASURE Forest Certification Award is earned by private landowners who display their commitment to the TREASURE Forest ethic through the physical management that takes place on their land. The TREASURE Forest Certification Award includes a numbered and signed TREASURE Forest Certificate, a TREASURE Forest sign to display on the property, and a TREASURE Forest hat. When the award is given, the land is called a Certified TREASURE Forest and the landowner is called a TREASURE Forest landowner. "TREASURE Forest" and "TREASURE Forest landowner" are earned titles that represent good stewardship of the land, protection and/or enhancement of the multiple values of the forest, and providing benefits to both present and future generations.

Since the inception of the TREASURE Forest Program in 1974, over 1,900 TREASURE Forests have been certified, collectively totaling over 1.8 million acres of Alabama forestland. 🌲



## Six Steps to Success

**A**nyone owning ten or more acres of forestland can be considered for TREASURE Forest certification. To be eligible, a landowner must do the following with respect to all their forestland in Alabama:

1. Identify one primary and at least one secondary management objective for the property based on the following list of choices: Timber Production, Wildlife, Recreation, Aesthetics, and Environmental Education.
2. Possess or acquire a written multiple-use management plan for the property. Your local Alabama Forestry Commission (AFC) office can help you identify options for obtaining a written management plan. (A written management plan is encouraged but not required for TREASURE Forest certification.)
3. Actively practice multiple-use management on the property consistent with TREASURE Forest standards.
4. When you feel that your property qualifies for the TREASURE Forest certification award, contact the AFC to begin the nomination process. You may also complete a nomination form, which is located on the AFC website at [www.forestry.state.al.us](http://www.forestry.state.al.us).
5. The property must be inspected by a registered forester and certified wildlife biologist.
6. The nomination and inspection report must be submitted to the TREASURE Forest Subcommittee of the Alabama Forestry Planning Committee for review and approval. This step will be arranged following the property inspection.

If you would like to be considered for a TREASURE Forest Certification Award, or know of someone else who may qualify, contact your local office of the Alabama Forestry Commission or your County Chapter of the Alabama TREASURE Forest Association or Alabama Forestry Planning Committee. They will be happy to assist you with the certification process. 🌲